

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 *Def.* 1. A personal shopping system for servicing customers at shopping
2 establishment and remote locations over at least one communications network, the
3 shopping system comprising:
4 at least one point-of-sale (POS) system located in the shopping
5 establishment;
6 at least one establishment or remotely located shopping terminal for
7 acquiring shopping related data; and
8 a centrally located controller for communicating with said POS system
9 and said at least one shopping terminal via said at least one network, processing said
10 shopping related data, and controlling shopping transactions engaged in by said
11 customers.

1 2. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said at least
2 one shopping terminal is a portable terminal, said portable terminal comprising an
3 elongated pen-shaped housing having an end with an optically transparent passage
4 therethrough.

1 3. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said at least

2 one shopping terminal is a portable terminal, said portable terminal comprising:
3 a housing having a generally elongated rectangular design which fits into
4 user's hand, said housing having a front surface, a back surface, a top surface, a bottom
5 surface and two side surfaces;
6 a touch sensitive display disposed on said front surface;
7 a plurality of buttons disposed on said front surface wherein each of said
8 buttons is associated with at least one user function or application upon activation;
9 a bar code reader for reading bar codes, said bar code reader having a
10 visible light source for displaying the area of reading for the bar code reader upon
11 activation of a bar code reading function on said portable terminal, said bar code reader
12 being configured to transmit the visible light away from said top surface of said portable
13 terminal's housing such that said light is visible to said user holding said portable
14 terminal; and
15 at least two bar code activation buttons located on said two side surfaces
16 of said housing such that said user's hand is supporting said portable terminal from said
17 bottom and side surfaces of said portable terminal upon activation of said bar code reader
18 with either of said bar code activation buttons, whereby the user can view said display
19 and said visible light source upon activation of either of said bar code activation buttons.

1 *DA* 4. The shopping system according to claim 3, wherein said portable
2 *B17* terminal further comprises a touch sensitive area within said touch sensitive display for
3 receiving data inputs from a stylus pen.

1 5. The shopping system according to claim 3, wherein said portable
2 terminal further comprises an information key for allowing a user to display product
3 information.

1 6. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said controller
2 comprises inference means for deriving a shopping profile for the customer.

1 7. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said at least
2 one shopping terminal comprises means for converting any currency amount to and from
3 a corresponding Euro amount.

1 8. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said at least
2 one shopping terminal is coupled to a telephone line and said shopping terminal
3 comprises means for providing secure and silent communications when transferring data
4 to and from said shopping terminal without notifying or disturbing a user.

1 9. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said at least
2 one shopping terminal is a bar code storage device for reading bar codes from a hardcopy
3 source, storing said bar codes, and transferring said bar codes to said controller over said
4 at least one network.

1 10. The shopping system according to claim 9, wherein said bar code
2 storage device comprises:

3 an egg-shaped housing;

4 a bar code reader for reading bar codes from a hardcopy source, said bar
5 code reader having a visible light indicator for indicating the scanning status of the bar
6 code reader and at least one bar code activation button located on the top surface of said
7 bar code storage device for activating said bar code reader;

8 memory storage mean coupled to said bar code reader for storing said bar
9 codes;

10 and communication means for transferring said bar codes to said controller
11 over said at least one network.

1 11. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said at least

2 one shopping terminal comprises a scanning system comprising a wearable computer
3 processor and a wearable scanning device in communication with the computer
4 processor.

12. The shopping system according to claim 11, wherein said scanning
2 system further comprises a headset having a speaker and a miniature display device for
3 providing a audio, graphical and video information.

13. The shopping system according to claim 1, further comprising one
2 or more proximity sensors coupled to said controller for monitoring product sales areas in
3 the shopping establishment.

14. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said controller
2 comprises:

3 means for controlling the transaction processing and the operation of the
4 POS system and said at least one shopping terminal;

5 means for communicating with at least one shopping terminal located
6 within said shopping establishment;

7 means for communicating with at least one remotely located shopping

8 terminal via a telephone;

9 means for communicating voice data between said controlling means and

10 said at least one remotely located shopping terminal;

11 means for remotely ordering goods to be gathered by store personnel at

12 said shopping establishment; and

13 means for communicating with said at least one remotely located shopping

14 terminal over the Internet.

1 15. The shopping system according to claim 14, wherein said
2 controlling means comprises:

3 means for starting and restarting the operation of said shopping system;

4 means for terminating the operation of said shopping system;

5 means for displaying the operational status of said shopping system;

6 means for controlling the day-to-day operations and maintenance tasks of

7 the shopping system;

8 means for displaying the status of communications related to said

9 shopping system;

10 means for preparing said shopping system to accept an upcoming day's

11 transactions;

12 means for transferring price data files from the POS system to said
13 controller; and
14 means for allowing a system operator to disable checking on transactions
15 by said controller so as to speed up checkout processing during busy periods.

1 16. The shopping system according to claim 14, wherein said
2 controlling means comprises means for processing transactions related to said shopping
3 establishment including start of day processing, normal store processing, end of day
4 processing and overnight processing.

1 17. The shopping system according to claim 14, wherein said means
2 for remotely ordering goods is used to generate a picking list from a home computing
3 terminal having access to the Internet.

1 18. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said shopping
2 terminal is a portable terminal, said portable terminal comprising means for freely
3 associating with a corresponding communications network.

1 19. The shopping system according to claim 1, wherein said shopping

terminal comprises means for fingerprint identification.

20. A bar code storage device for communicating with a centralized controller over at least one communications network, comprising:

- an egg-shaped housing;
- a bar code reader for reading bar codes from a hardcopy source, said bar code reader having a visible light indicator for indicating the scanning status of the bar code reader and at least one bar code activation button located on the top surface of said terminal for activating said bar code reader;
- memory storage means coupled to said bar code reader for storing said bar codes;
- and communication means for transferring said bar codes to said controller over the at least one network.

21. A wearable scanning system for communicating information to and from a user over at least one communications network, said scanning system comprising:

- a computer processor in communication with the at least one network constructed and arranged for wearing on the user's forearm;
- a ring-like scanning device in communication with said computer

6 processor for wearing on the user's hand; and
 7 a headset in communication with said computer processor, said headset
 8 comprising a speaker and a miniaturized display device for providing multimedia
 9 information to the user.

1 22. A shopping establishment theft prevention system for use in a
 2 shopping system utilizing at least one portable bar code scanner in communication with a
 3 centralized controller, said theft prevention system comprising:
 4 one or more proximity sensors in communication with said controller for
 5 monitoring product sales areas in the shopping establishment;
 6 one or more indicators in communication with each of the
 7 proximity sensors for indicating the scan status of sales items corresponding to the
 8 product sales areas being monitored by said proximity sensors.


1 *Sub 017* 23. A method for shopping at a shopping establishment having a
 2 centrally-controlled shopping system for processing shopping transactions and orders
 3 from shopping establishment and remote locations, the system having a point-of-sale
 4 (POS) system located in the shopping establishment, at least one establishment or
 5 remotely located portable shopping terminal, and a controller in communication with the

6 POS system and the at least one terminal via at least one communications network, said
7 method comprising:

8 associating the terminal with the at least one network and a customer;
9 scanning one or more items to be purchased using the terminal;
10 returning the terminal to the terminal receptacle;
11 collecting a receipt corresponding to the scanned items; and
purchasing the scanned items at a customer check-out station.

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3 forwarding said shopping list to the controller;
4 generating a picking list at the controller corresponding to items identified
5 in the shopping list; and
6 collecting the items identified in the picking list for check-out or delivery.

1  27. The method according to claim 23, further comprising:
2 generating a shopping list from a remote location;
3 forwarding said shopping list to the controller;
4 generating a picking list at the controller corresponding to items identified
5 in the shopping list;
6 assigning a picking list ID barcode to the picking list;
7 printing a label showing the picking list ID barcode;
8 scanning the items corresponding to the picking list; and
9 collecting the scanned items for check-out or delivery.

1 28. A method for communicating data to and from a remote shopping
2 terminal over a telephone line without notifying the user of the terminal, said method
3 comprising the steps of:
4 receiving a caller ID signal at the terminal;

5 identifying the caller ID signal as a preprogrammed and authorized caller
6 ID;
7 deactivating an audible or visual signal indicative of a required user
8 response;
9 engaging the line to establish communication with the terminal; and
10 generating a non-intrusive signal indicating data transfer activity on the
11 telephone line.

1 29. A portable terminal comprising:
2 a housing having a generally elongated rectangular design which fits into
3 user's hand, said housing having a front surface, a back surface, a top surface, a bottom
4 surface and two side surfaces;
5 a terminal display disposed on said front surface,
6 a plurality of buttons disposed on said front surface wherein each of said
7 buttons is associated with at least one user function or application upon activation;
8 a bar code reader for reading bar codes, said bar code reader having a
9 visible light source for displaying the area of reading for the bar code reader upon
10 activation of a bar code reading function on said terminal, said bar code reader being
11 configured to transmit the visible light away from said top surface of said terminal's

1 housing such that said light is visible to said user holding said terminal; and
2 a plurality of bar code activation buttons for activating said bar code
3 reader disposed on one or more surfaces of said housing such that said user's hand is
4 supporting said terminal from said bottom and side surfaces of said terminal upon
5 activation of said bar code reader with either of said bar code activation buttons,
6 and whereby the user can view said display and said visible light source upon activation
7 of either of said bar code activation buttons.

1 30. The terminal according to claim 29, wherein said plurality of bar
2 code activation buttons comprises:

3 a first bar code activation button disposed on a first of said two side
4 surfaces of said housing;

5 a second bar code activation button disposed on a second of said two side
6 surfaces of said housing; and

7 a third bar code activation button disposed on the top surface of said
8 housing.

1 31. The terminal according to claim 29, wherein said bar code reader
2 outputs a digital bar code pattern and said terminal further comprises:

3 a bar code decoder coupled to said bar code reader for interpreting said
4 digital bar code pattern and generating corresponding decoded bar code data

5 a communications interface coupled to said bar code decoder for
6 converting said decoded bar code data for further processing, said communications
7 interface comprising memory means for storing a terminal operating system, terminal
8 application programs and related data; and

9 a microprocessor coupled to said communications interface for processing
10 said converted decoded bar code data, executing said terminal operating system and said
11 terminal applications, and controlling the operation of said terminal device, said
12 microprocessor in turn comprising:

13 an interface for coupling said microprocessor to said touch
14 sensitive display;

15 one or more interfaces for receiving user-activated function
16 commands via activation of said buttons; and

17 a synchronization port for automatically synchronizing said
18 terminal to a host computing device.

1 32. The terminal according to claim 29, wherein said terminal display
2 comprises a touch sensitive display.

1 33. The terminal according to claim 32, wherein said touch sensitive
2 display comprises a touch sensitive area for receiving data inputs from a stylus pen.

1 34. The terminal according to claim 29, further comprising an
2 information key for allowing a user to display product information.

1 35. The terminal according to claim 29, further comprising means for
2 converting any currency amount to and from a corresponding Euro amount.

1 36. The terminal according to claim 29, wherein said terminal is
2 coupled to a telephone line and said terminal comprises means for providing secure and
3 silent communications when transferring data to and from said terminal without notifying
4 or disturbing a user.

1 37. The terminal according to claim 29, wherein said portable terminal
2 comprises means for freely associating with a corresponding communications network.

1 38. The terminal according to claim 29, wherein said terminal

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- 2 comprises means for fingerprint identification.

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